THE PROFUNDITY OF THE ABHIDHAMMA

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Abhidhamma, a psychological and philosophical discourse, is a unique teaching of the Buddha. In this teaching the Buddha analyzed mainly mind and matter which are the ultimate phenomena in this world. The study of *Abhidhamma* enables us to purify our view, because the purification of view can be attained only by seeing mind and matter as they really are.

The main subjects analyzed in the *Abhidhamma* are *nāma* and *rūpa* or mind and matter. Mind is a phenomenon that is aware of an object, while matter is a phenomenon that is unable to be aware of an object. Mind and matter, although they have different characteristics, relate to each other to perform their functions.

Analysis of Mind

The *Abhidhamma* explains mind with the technical term *nāma*, meaning a phenomenon that inclines toward an object. Mind consists of consciousness (*citta*) and mental properties (*cetasika*). It is a unity of phenomena with the characteristic as the inclination towards an object. A unit of mind is indivisible even they have individual characteristic. According to the individual characteristic, mind is enumerated as one consciousness and 52 mental properties.

The *Abhidhamma* divides the consciousness into 89 or 121 in other aspects such as plane, association, and so on. Regarding the division of their own nature (*jāti*) the consciousness is classified into four: *Kusala* (wholesome), *Akusala* (unwholesome), *Vipāka* (resultant) and *Kiriya* (inoperative).

When consciousness arises, it arises together with mental properties (*cetasika*). The mental properties are enumerated to be 52.

Universal 7

Particular 6

Unwholesome 14

Beautiful 25

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One consciousness and seven universal mental properties numbered eight as minimum form a unit of mind. Mind arises in group depending on the meeting of sense-base and working with objects.

Analysis of Matter

The *Abhidhamma* explains matter with the technical term *rūpa*, meaning a phenomenon that is perished through malevolent conditions, cold, heat and so on. Matter consists of foundation and derivatives. The foundations are the four elements: earth element, water element, fire element and air element. Depending on the four elements there exist the derivative matters: color, smell, taste and nutritive essence. These eight matters - four elements and four derivatives - form a molecule of matter which is indivisible without losing their characteristic. The molecule of eight matters is a material unit which arises in *Anindriyabaddha* (a thing without life faculty) and in *indriyabaddha* (a living being with life faculty). However, a living being is composed of nine matters as minimum by adding *Jīvita* to the eight inseparable matters. In Buddhism, the matter of *Jīvita* is produced only by *Kamma*. Therefore the *Jīvita* material quality cannot be found in a thing without life faculty.

In living beings there exists a molecule of nine matters as minimum. There are some more matters that are produced by only *Kamma* within sentient beings.

There are sensitive matters: eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. Each of them exists together with the nine matters forming a unit of sensitive eye, ear and so on. There is a matter of heart that serves as a base of some minds. There are also the two matters of sex - *itthibhāva*, femininity and *pumbhāva,* masculinity - which are the principle of female or male life. These nine matters, one *jīvita*, five sensitive matter, two matters of sex and one heart base, are produced by only *kamma* and exist in only sentient beings.

Sound that comes into contact with sensitive ear is expressed as matter that is produced by one of two conditions, mind or *utu*. These eighteen matters are real matter, with individual characteristic and produced by conditions.

Mental Process

The *Abhidhamma* discourse covers all organism, inorganism and sentient beings. Mental process deals with only sentient beings. A life-existence, as rebirth, starts with *paṭisandhi-viññâṇa*, re-linking consciousness, numbered nineteen, which covers all sentient beings.

Regarding a human being the nine types of wholesome resultant consciousness, one investigation with indifferent feeling and eightfold great resultant consciousness, perform the re-linking function.

A human life starts with one of these nine *viññāṇas* which is produced by *kamma* with the help of *kilesa*, especially ignorance and craving. When *Viññāṇa* arises there arise the associated mental properties depending on one of newly *kamma*-born matters. The *Viññāṇa* together with associated mental properties runs with one of the three objects, *kamma*, *kamma-nimitta*, and *gati-nimitta*, that come into contact through the power of *kamma*. In one life-existence the same type of *viññāṇa* runs repeatedly in a life-span performing the three different functions: re-linking function at the first moment, demising function at the last moment, and the function of life principle (*Bhavaṅga*) between the first and the last moment. The mental process that runs with the three objects is called a "passive" mental process. When a person gets to sleep, within him, the only passive mental process is running.

However, when a person awakes, he gets contact with an external object through his sense organ, the passive mental process stops and the active mental process enters. Then the active mental process runs with newly entering object.

There are six objects: visible object, sound, smell, taste, tangible object and the other *Dhamma* objects including *Nibbāna*. These six objects come into manifestation in six doors: eye-door, ear-door, nose-door, tongue-door, body-door and mind-door.

Visible object comes into manifestation simultaneously in two doors - eye-door and mind-door. In the same way sound appears in two doors - ear-door and mind-door; smell in two doors - nose-door and mind-door; taste in two doors - tongue-door and mind-door; tangible object in two doors - body-door and mind-door. The other *dhamma* objects appear in just mind-door. When an object comes into contact through sense doors, an active mental process, depending on the mental base, runs with the object that comes into contact. Generally speaking, the object that comes into contact with the respective sense organ remains for the seventeen thought-moments in maximum. At the end of the

active mental process there enters a passive mental process. In this way the mental process, active and passive, is running in the whole life.

Material Process

In a life existence of a sentient being there are two processes, mental process and material process, which are running side by side since the moment of rebirth starts.

Regarding rebirth there are four ways of generation: rebirth in egg, rebirth in a womb, rebirth in moisture, and spontaneous rebirth. When rebirth happens, it starts with re-linking consciousness and *kamma*-born matter. There are four types of matter in accordance with four conditions: *Kamma*, *Citta*, *Utu*, and *Āhāra*. *Jīvita* (life), *hadaya* (heart), femininity, masculinity, and the five sensitive matters (eye, ear, nose, tongue and body) are the nine matters that are born of only *kamma*. The eight indivisible matters (four elements color, smell, taste, and nutritive essence) are produced by four conditions. But sound, which can be known by ear, is produced by two conditions, mind and *Utu*.

A material process (*rūpasantati*) starts with *kamma*-born matter. The *kamma*-born matter begins at the arising moment of re-linking consciousness within a being whose life is composed of five aggragates. Since then that *kamma*-born matter starts to run repeatedly up to the ceasing moment of death consciousness.

Then the second material process is the process of *Utu*-born matter. It begins at the existing moment of re-linking consciousness. Since then it runs repeatedly even beyond death.

The third material process is the process of mind-born matters. It begins at the arising moment of the first *bhavaṅga-citta*. Since then the 75 *cittas* apart from the ten *viññāṇa cittas* and the four *Arūpa vipāka cittas*, produce mind-born matter at their very arising moment. The produced mind-born matters remain as long as their life-span.

The fourth material process is the process of *Āhāra*-born matter. It begins at the moment the nutritive essence spreads and effects. Depending on nutriment the *Āhāra*-born matter runs repeatedly up to the end of life. In this way the material process produced by four conditions is running within a sentient being for the whole life.

Three repetitions

There are three repetitions that perform their functions repeatedly relating to one another: *Kilesa* (mental defilement), *kamma* (reproductive mental energy), and *Vipāka* (result of *Kilesa* and *Kamma*). *Kilesa* causes *Kamma* to accumulate and *Kamma* in turn produces *vipāka*. *Vipāka* leads to the increase of *Kilesa*. Then *Kilesa* again causes *Kamma* to accumulate, and *Kamma* produces *Vipāka*. In this way the three causal and effective repetitions continue their functions.

To Cut off Repetition

The repetition causes suffering to arise and remain; it must be cut off by following the Middle Way. Depending on morality one must develop mental concentration with the help of Right Mindfulness and Right Effort. Then he must develop his Right View with the help of Right Thought. When he attains the Enlightenment, the entire *Kilesa* will be burnt down. When *Kilesa* ceases *Kamma* is unable to accumulate in a mental process. The reproductive power of *Kamma* is destructive. Then one's life remains as a tree of which roots are completely removed. There do not exist any causes and conditions. When cause and condition cease it is the end of suffering. The *Abhidhamma* highlights our life-existence in four ways: the problem, the cause of problem, the solution of problem, and the way to the solution of problem. The final liberation is possible only by understanding of the life-existence in four ways and the liberation is possible to be attained only by the profundity of *Abhidhamma*.